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Jenkins

MEMORIAL
OF
THE INHABITANTS
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

MARCH 21, 1806.

Referred to the committee of the whole house on the state
of the union.

CITY OF WASHINGTON: .

A. & G. WAY, PRINTERS.

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1806.

MEMORIAL

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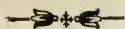
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MEMORIAL.



*To the senate and house of representatives of
the United States, in congress assembled.*

THE MEMORIAL OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE
CITY OF NEW-YORK,

RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH,

THAT your memorialists, in common with their fellow citizens throughout the United States, are alarmed at the threatening aspect of public affairs, and, in addition to the general solicitude, are particularly impressed by the sense of immediate danger. Trusting that the wisdom of government would consider the port of New York as of primary importance, your memorialists were in tranquil expectation that seasonable provision would be made for its security. Relying, also, as they ought, on the assurances of peace, repeatedly given; concurring in the opinion, that it was of the utmost consequence to pay the national debt, and rejoiced to learn, that by adhering to justice in our foreign relations, and to economy in our domestic concerns, we could meet the public exigencies and command the respect of foreign nations, they shut their ears to every suggestion of doubt, difficulty or danger. They mean not now to express diffidence in the public councils; but when they view the property collected in their city, and its defenceless condition, they are compelled to intreat the attention of government.

Your memorialists say, with no vain exultation, but with anxious concern, that New York may be considered as the emporium of American commerce. The general sense of its natural advantages will appear from the unparalleled increase of population, by the establishment of useful citizens from every state, and from the extent of its domestic trade. In either view of the subject, New York is as well the common property and concern of the union as of its own particular citizens. The produce of other states finds there a valuable market, and there also, is to be found a cheap and ready supply of foreign commodities. Tobacco, rice, cotton and naval stores, from the southern, as well as salted provisions, ashes and furs, from the northern states, are among the exports of New York. For, the facility with which assorted cargoes can be procured for ports where large quantities of a single article would not find a market, enables an intelligent merchant to give the cultivators of those states an advanced price for their produce. And in like manner, nearly half of the five eastern states and New Jersey, and no inconsiderable part of the four southern states, find it most convenient and advantageous to supply themselves at New York with articles of foreign growth and manufacture. Thus the large capital accumulated by the successful labor of your memorialists, is poured through a thousand channels, ministering to the convenience, supplying the wants and gratifying the wishes of their fellow citizens in every part of the union.

In the conviction that New York is to be considered as the political centre of this widely extended dominion, Great Britain collected in it her main force during the war of our independence; and the same conviction would probably lead any other foe to take possession of it, or to lay it in ashes, according to his means and views, whether contemplating with adequate force, a permanent conquest, or, at inferior expense, a diminution of the national resources. And

even supposing that it should escape public hostility, still the property it contains, and the facility with which it may be assailed, point it out as the object of predatory warfare.

Your memorialists are far from arraigning the wisdom of measures which government has already adopted, or may now contemplate; neither do they pretend to know the exigencies or resources of the country. But while they express their willingness to bear such burdens, as it may be thought proper to impose, they conceive it their duty to represent, that if the acquisition of new territory is contemplated, and the condition of the country will not enable the government to accomplish, both that object, and provide for the defence of our principal sea ports, it is the dictate not only of wisdom, but of justice, to prefer the security of those places from whence the revenue is drawn, to expending it on remote objects of less importance.

Placed in a situation, where, as well from their relations to the whole empire, as from the accumulations of their own industry, their property, their persons, and what is still more dear, their wives and children, are exposed to peril and outrage; while the revenue drawn from them in a single year, might, if properly applied, provide for permanent defence; if your memorialists could, in submissive silence, suppress the feelings which arise out of their condition, they must be more or less than men.

Strong in the consciousness of *right*, and in the sentiment of freedom; convinced that they have performed towards the union all the duties of faithful citizens, they claim, in return, the performance of that great duty of government, *protection*.

With the utmost respect for the legislature of the union, and confiding in their wisdom and justice, your memorialists, therefore, entreat your attention to the importance of their situation and the dangers to which they are exposed, and they humbly pray, that per-

manent defences for the city and port of New York, may be speedily commenced, on a scale that will insure protection, against national hostility; and, as a security against predatory incursions, that this harbour may be made the station of such ships of war, as are not otherwise employed.

And your memorialists, &c.

Signed on behalf of the inhabitants of the second ward of the city of New York, in virtue of their resolves at a meeting held at the Union hotel the 14th day of March, 1806, pursuant to a recommendation of the common council of the said city.

ELIAS NEXSEN, Chairman.

JOHN W. MULLIGAN, Sec'ry.



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